

Media + Design students aid local nonprofits

June 03, 2022 2:45 PM SoPA News Staff

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Tulane SoPA's Media + Design Capstone students Rachel Ault, Avonda Commodore and Susan McCann researched, developed and presented a comprehensive strategic communication plan that incorporates advertising, digital marketing and public relations tactics to address their client's communication needs and challenges.

Students in the Tulane University School of Professional Advancement [Media + Design Program](#) shared their talents with the local community as they worked in partnership with two New Orleans area non-profits, Start The Adventure In Reading (STAIR Nola) and The New Neighbor Project.

“As a small non-profit with a tiny budget, we are grateful to have the immense talent of the SoPA students that work pro bono on our communication plan,” said Shannon Able, [STAIR Nola](#) executive director. “The fruits of their labor will go far to help STAIR effectively reach the diverse audiences we need to interface with families of children in need, volunteers, and donors.”

As part of the Media + Design Capstone and Design Studio II classes, students conducted research on their selected organizations and applied the skills they learned in the classroom to develop campaigns for the non-profit partners.

“We are so proud of our students who have not only excelled in the classroom but have also found a passion for being responsible and engaged citizens in their communities,” said Amanda Garcia, Tulane SoPA Media + Design Program Director. “Through their work with their non-profit partners this semester our students used their skills in advertising, design, digital marketing and public relations to create work that will help these organizations better serve their communities.”

[STAIR Nola](#) is an early-childhood literacy program that works to improve the reading skills and self-esteem of lower elementary school students with one-on-one tutoring sessions with trained tutors. The SoPA students developed a strategic communications plan to aid STAIR in stakeholder engagement. The students’ work culminates with a presentation of their ideas to their client. Many organizations put their ideas into action.

“We’re excited to employ their plans that will update and improve the public face of our organization,” said Able. “We couldn’t have completed this comprehensive communications plan without their assistance.”

Similarly, students in Design Studio II (DDSN 3400) were introduced to their non-profit partner – [The New Neighbor Project](#) through [Tulane’s Center for Public Service](#). The New Neighbor Project is an organization that provides support to our city’s immigrant neighbors through donation-based ESL and citizenship classes, as well as citizenship application assistance and scholarship opportunities to help provide a holistic pathway to citizenship for people in our community. The students were inspired to use design to help the organization better communicate its message and initiatives, while learning about the role of design and design thinking as a problem-solving tool to elicit awareness, empowerment, improvement and change.

“The New Neighbor Project is so pleased to be able to work with the Design Studio II students at Tulane and looking forward to using their designs in our materials for the future,” said Amy Dudgeon, The New Neighbor executive director. “With their help, we will be able to reach the immigrant community of New Orleans more effectively and promote our ESL and citizenship classes through outreach and social media. We truly benefit from the partnerships we have created with Tulane and look forward to more collaboration in the future.”

The New Neighbor Project is undergoing a rebrand project that will include the implementation of a new logo designed by Tulane SoPA Media + Design student Shiloh Latham during the Design Studio II course.